

NBC BRIEFING

23 April 1968

NEAR EAST ROUNDUP

Jerusalem

- I. Serious incident possibly due to large crowds and military equipment Israelis bringing into Jerusalem for 10th anniversary parade Thursday.
 - A. ~~Israelis assure some 75 tanks in parade will not actually carry ammunition, and troops' rifles will be unloaded, but this not satisfying to Jordanians, who have brought up armor of their own.~~
 - B. ~~Jordanians closely trying to make most vehement protests possible against this technical violation armistice agreement, since they fear Cairo would charge them with weakness or collaboration if they neglected make stir.~~
- II. There is real danger overheated emotions of civilians on both sides producing incident which would then involve troops.

The Arabian Peninsula

- I. New unrest, partly inspired by Yemen and Egypt, is expected at several points on the Arabian Peninsula.
 - A. A general deterioration in the security situation has induced the British to move additional troops to Aden.
 - B. Show of strength intended in part to cope with general strikes threatened for 25 April.
 - C. There are also signs of possible strikes among oil workers in eastern Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, where the oil operations are American-owned.

1. The unrest in Saudi Arabia would probably be related to the Saudi economic problems, principally the decline in the value of the riyal.
 2. Past trouble in Bahrain has had political overtones--local groups are trying to gain more control over the ruler and, indirectly, of his British protectors.
- II. Saudi unrest may arise in part from workers' belief Fayal's assumption broader powers meant other "liberal" changes would be forthcoming--this very doubtful in domestic sphere.
- A. In foreign relations, however, Fayal speech broadcast Radio 18 April announced for first time government policy of "positive neutrality," defined as "befriend every state which does not attack it."
1. This statement would seem put Saudi foreign policy philosophy in line with Nasir's, but Fayal applies it to intra-Arab relations as well--something of disappointment to Cairo.
 2. In curt statement on relations with "Eastern states" Fayal said no "creed which differs with principles of Islam" allowed to enter country, but that relations will be based on UN charter.
 3. By contrast, statement on relations with US much fuller, says Saudis seek "strengthen friendly relations" though disappointed by US stand on Gulf of Aqaba. Fayal emphasized that Dhahran a Saudi, not a US base.

Nasir's Trip

- I. Nasir will fly to Moscow in a Soviet TU-104 on 29 April. During his 18-19 day visit, he hopes to travel in several areas of the USSR.
- II. He will probably have discussions covering basic problems created by his UAR.

B. The USSR may make additional aid offers.

- III. Nasir will be given special "red carpet" treatment since Moscow considers him the most important of the Asian-African nationalist leaders.

Bloc Aid to the Near East

- I. Substantial quantities of late model Soviet bloc arms, superior to similar types held by Israel, are expected to be delivered to Syria shortly.

A.

- II. The Sino-Soviet bloc is providing Yemen with economic aid worth over \$50,000,000 and military equipment worth an estimated \$30,000,000.

A. Almost 90 bloc economic advisers and technicians are building a port, airfields and other projects, while at least 60 military specialists are maintaining and training in the use of bloc equipment.

B. The Imam continues to seek additional bloc economic and military assistance.

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